

Detailed description of the content in the curriculum for a category B driving licence

Driver education task

Sweden is a country in which the opportunity to use public transport services varies. Having a driving licence is therefore basic to a high quality of life and well-being for many people. But there is also a downside to motor traffic. It claims lives and has a negative impact on the environment. Driving a car therefore entails a major responsibility.

Characteristic of a good driver is that he/she is capable not only of manoeuvring a vehicle, but also understands, appreciates and accepts the norm that surrounds good, safe and environmentally-sound driving. An important task in driver education is to implant this firmly in learners. Driver education should also show that alternative means of transport to the car can be preferable from a safety and environmental perspective. Further, driver education must teach an ability to take in and understand the conditions and values of other road users.

The driving course for aspirant drivers should be adapted to the circumstances and needs of every learner while also being as comparable as possible, irrespective of where in the country it is being run. This detailed description of the curriculum for a category B driving licence describes and explains the common objectives for driver education. A comparable education does not mean, however, that the teaching methods must be exactly the same everywhere.

Common task for all driving teachers

The main task of all driving teachers, whether professional or private, is to help learners become responsible drivers, contribute to their all-round development and establish the grounds from which they turn into good enough drivers to be entrusted with a driving licence. The course should also convey the message that conditions are constantly changing and that there will always be something more to learn. In this context, attention should be given to the concept of learning as long as you live. Driving is a lot about making decisions. Learner drivers should therefore be trained to think critically, examine facts and conditions and realise the consequences of different choices. Ethical and moral issues in connection with driving should also be covered in the course. An environmental perspective should also be instilled to provide learner drivers with insight and knowledge so that they can develop their own individual approach to the effect of cars on the environment and help prevent negative environmental impact.

Make-up and structure of the curriculum

When analysing what a driver needs to know to be able to drive a car in a safe and environmentally-sound way, it became apparent that a good ability to manoeuvre the vehicle was not enough. A driver must also have the desire to behave properly as well as enough experience that he/she can act correctly. Moreover, drivers must be able to understand that the social context affects what they know, what they want to do and what they should do as the driver. In order to succeed in driving a car, every learner driver must be taught what the correct behaviour is in different situations, the factors that can influence behaviour, and how to develop a way of

thinking to be able to appraise themselves, their driving and their choice of transportation in different situations.

A driver has many things to do and think about. First, the trip must be planned, and then different choices must be made for reaching the destination in the best way possible. Added to this, the driver must also be able to handle the car in different traffic situations. In other words, many different types of demands are placed on a driver. It is these demands that form the framework for the curriculum and are covered in the following modules: *manoeuvring, vehicles and the environment*; *driving in different traffic environments*; *travelling by car under special conditions*; and *personal circumstances and goals in life*.

Manoeuvring, vehicles and the environment forms the basis for driving a car. If a learner driver has not practised enough that he/she can perform the most basic manoeuvres automatically, major problems arise when trying to handle the enormous flow of information that a driver needs to process and act upon while driving. Further, a driver must know how a car should be equipped and the maintenance it needs to be as safe and as environmentally friendly as possible.

It is essential that a driver can manage *driving in different traffic environments*. While driving, the driver must interact with other road users, be able to predict their behaviour and make it possible for them to understand and foresee what he/she intends to do. It is therefore important to learn formal and informal rules and act accordingly.

Travelling by car under special conditions refers to the reason and purpose of the journey and the traffic environment in which it takes place. The car is seen here as a tool for managing daily life. At this level, the driver must decide when, with whom and whether he/she should drive. These decisions are of major significance for road safety and the environment.

Personal circumstances and goals in life concerns how a person's different motives and aspirations at a particular stage of life affects his/her driving. In this context, a car is seen as a means to fulfil the expectations one has in life. Another aspect is that our everyday life also affects how we travel and behave as drivers.

The four overarching modules have been supplemented in this curriculum by two knowledge areas: *theory and skills* and *self-appraisal*. *Theory and skills* focuses on the theoretical knowledge and skills needed to be able to drive and travel by car. *Self-appraisal* focuses on the individual driver. The main idea here is self-appraisal in relation to driving and travel.

The four modules in combination with the two knowledge areas lead directly into the various driver qualifications. Together they provide the proficiency that driver education should aim to give learners. Accordingly they also specify what must be covered in the driver education course.

Governed by objectives

The curriculum controls driver education to the extent that it governs the activities conducted. As support for this, and as help in understanding what is expected, the following terms are used: *aim, content and character* and *objectives*. These terms are to be interpreted in unison as they exhibit an integrated view of the driver education course. The objectives are written in a way that enables variation in interpretation. They indicate a broad, but clear framework for the course. The intention is to allow teachers to vary their instruction, without for that matter relinquishing the requirement on comparable education.

The aim establishes why the different modules are included in the course.

Content and character specifies the essential features and subject matter in the course.

The objectives express the minimum level that a learner driver must have reached to be considered qualified for a car driving licence. The objectives are thereby related to the requirement on comparable education. The objectives shall also form the basis for a national and local evaluation of the teaching/instruction.

Active verbs

The objectives in the curriculum are expressed through *active verbs*. These verbs indicate the differences between various types of objectives. Some verbs can have several different meanings, depending on the situation and language usage. Their interpretation may therefore not be absolute or definite. The following is an explanation of the active verbs used in this curriculum.

Carry out

The learner driver performs a task from start to finish.

Explain

The learner driver describes and considers a knowledge area or course of events.

Use, apply, show, choose, demonstrate

The learner does something based on his/her knowledge.

Appraise, assess

The learner driver adopts a standpoint and can explain why.

Identify, foresee

The learner driver recognises something and can motivate why.

Describe

The learner driver can describe facts with a certain degree of understanding of what these facts stand for.

Exemplify, show

The learner driver can explain a knowledge area or course of events using examples.

Accept

The learner driver takes a stand on a specific viewpoint.

Adapt

The learner driver can adapt his/her behaviour to a certain degree.

Manoeuvring, vehicles and the environment

Aim

The aim of the manoeuvring, vehicles and the environment module is that the learner driver will learn how to manoeuvre the vehicle and be able to do this in a safe and environmentally-sound way. At the same time, the learner driver should develop a realistic appraisal of his/her own ability to do this. This includes learning how the car functions, its various protective systems and the relationship between driving technique and environmental impact. In addition, the learner shall develop an ability to reflect on events that occur during his/her driver education and thereby be more able to absorb impressions and experience that could contribute to a better understanding of the value of safe driving.

Content and character

Manoeuvring is a motor skill that lies at the basis of all driving and which must be performed without demanding too much of the driver's attention. This leaves the driver with more mental reserves to be able to read traffic, and thereby create safety margins. In addition, good motor skills are a necessity to be able to understand the impact of the laws of nature on cars under different circumstances. This shall contribute to a realistic view of one's own driving ability and understanding of how to avoid risks.

Vehicle maintenance and service is related to road safety and the environment. It is therefore important for a driver to know how poor maintenance can affect the car's roadworthiness, as well as emission and noise levels. Safety consciousness should include knowledge relating to the internal and external safety features of the vehicle as well as how it should be equipped. Further, it is important that a driver understands what happens when the protective systems are not used, are used incorrectly or when their function is overestimated.

To a large degree this concerns understanding contexts, learning what is dangerous and what is not, learning to know oneself and one's own capabilities and an ability to assess risks in an appropriate way. Further, a holistic approach to vehicles is important in knowing how driving techniques and maintenance create safety margins, reduce fuel consumption and contribute to less vehicle wear and tear. In the long run this aims at a better understanding and desire to travel safely and in an environmentally-conscious way.

Driving in different traffic environments

Aim

The aim of the *driving in different traffic environments* module is to develop the learner's ability to drive a car in a safe and environmentally-sound way in interaction with other road users, in different traffic situations and under different conditions. This module also aims to develop the learner's ability to show foresight, detect risks and drive with such safety margins that he/she will not become involved in critical situations. Training these abilities is a key element in this module. The aim of the module is also to impart knowledge and understanding of why there are traffic rules and how they should be observed.

Content and character

To be able to interact with other road users, it is important to know the traffic rules that apply to driving a car. At the same time, not all road users obey these rules. This fact necessitates good adaptability. Any traffic situation can develop in a multitude of different ways, which means that a driver must be able, as far as possible, to foresee what might happen before it actually does. A driver must therefore be able to deal with a situation before it becomes dangerous. It is therefore important for the driver to have a realistic idea about his/her own capabilities and good knowledge about his/her own style of driving.

An important quality in a driver is the ability to communicate. Through communication a driver demonstrates his/her intention and is helped to understand that of others. In this way, no one needs be surprised. It means that the driver, depending on the traffic situation, adapts his/her speed, seeks eye contact with other road users, positions the vehicle correctly and uses the blinkers when moving laterally.

Driving technique directly affects fuel consumption and ultimately the environment and people. Insight into this creates an awareness on the part of the driver as to how he/she can help reduce emissions of dangerous substances through his/her driving technique. Driving that is characterised by good planning also results in an economic driving style.

Travelling by car under special conditions

Aim

The aim of the *travelling by car under special conditions* module is to teach the learner about the importance of planning his/her journey with regard to where, when, how, under what conditions and why a journey should be undertaken. The learner should be able to use this knowledge to travel in a manner that is as environmentally sound as possible while avoiding travelling under risky conditions, such as in heavy traffic, on slippery road surfaces, during inclement weather, while under the influence of alcohol, or when tired or drowsy, etc.

Content and character

It is important to realise that there are many factors that always affect driver behaviour and safety. This knowledge means that the driver learns to recognise these factors, evaluate them and in certain cases is able to counteract their impact. Hence, a driver must always critically examine his/her reasons for using the car. A driver with this ability will better understand what lies behind his/her choice. Hopefully, this will mean a greater desire to evaluate, thoroughly think through and reflect upon the chosen mode of travel. This improves road safety while reducing the environmental impact of travelling.

Personal circumstances and goals in life

Aim

The aim of the *personal circumstances and goals in life* module is to give the learner an understanding of how different personal and social circumstances affect his/her role as a car driver. The learner must be aware of how driver behaviour and the risk of accidents are related to factors such as age, gender, personality, lifestyle, social background, education and peer group affiliation. Through understanding

these relationships, the learner is expected to be better able to adapt his/her driving so that the risks associated with his/her own circumstances are taken into account.

Content and character

People use cars and other transport modes to a different extent and for different reasons during the various stages of life. This is due to the fact that personal circumstances change constantly. Knowing how the use of a car changes from when people are young to when they stop driving altogether is therefore important to understanding how different age groups choose their mode of transport. A driver also needs to know when, where and how to use a car best and when this is less suitable. Being a good driver entails not only adequate motor skills but social skills as well. It is therefore important for a driver to know that age, gender, peer group affiliation, personality and lifestyle affect when, where, how and why the car is used.